



## smiley al says:

### Baby teeth matter!

Take good care of your teeth now and you will have good teeth when you are a grown-up.

#### Remember:

- \* Teeth grow in a different way from the rest of your body.
- \* Baby teeth have important work to do.
- \* If you lose your baby teeth too soon, you may have problems eating, talking or smiling.
- \* Healthy teeth can make you look nice and feel good.
  - \* Cavities can hurt!
  - \* You can prevent cavities (tooth decay) by brushing your teeth every day and by not eating a lot of candy and soft drinks.
  - \* Don't share spoons, cups or toothbrushes with others.



healthy teeth =  
healthy you



Taking care of your teeth now will help you have healthy teeth and a nice smile when you grow up.

This *Smile Alabama!* brochure is made possible by a grant from the Robert Wood Johnson 21st Century Challenge Fund and produced by the Alabama Medicaid Agency Research and Development Unit. Creative design and production by Alison R. Johnson and photography by Booker T. Washington Magnet High School, Photography Magnet, Montgomery. © Copyright 2003, Alabama Medicaid Agency.



Let's learn why together...

## Baby Teeth Are Important!

**A**s you grow up, your body gets bigger and taller. Your teeth are growing too, but in a different way. During your life, you will have two sets of teeth. The first teeth are called primary teeth. Most people call these “baby” teeth. You will start losing these teeth around age 5 or 6. The new permanent teeth that grow in after you lose your baby teeth are meant to last the rest of your life.

Many people think that baby teeth do not matter since you are going to lose them any way. This is not true! Even though you are no longer a baby, there are some very good reasons to take care of your baby or primary teeth.



**...permanent teeth are meant to last the rest of your life.**

## Baby teeth have important work to do.



**Y**our primary (baby) teeth are needed to help you talk, smile, eat and hold the right amount of space for your grown-up, permanent teeth. If you lose your baby teeth too soon, it can cause you to have problems with your teeth all of your life.

**...most children do not get cavities if they brush their teeth every day...**

## Cavities can hurt!

**I**f you get a cavity, it can make your mouth hurt all the time. The good news is that most children do not get cavities or have toothaches if they brush their teeth every day and stay away from drinks and candy with sugar in them. You can prevent cavities!

**you can prevent cavities.**

